own. In any well balanced consideration of human institutions '. comparative method must be included, and here is a great grx of mankind, highly civilized, until recently remote from the Co-. dent, whose experience should prove of no little use to the re . the race.

Moreover, the Chinese, so numerous and so highly culture almost a generation have been in process of change. All ph? life are being affected, with results for the moment chaoti with an outcome as yet unpredictable. Whatever the futi cannot be without marked significance for all the world.

An understanding of the Chinese, therefore, their history, * culture, and their present problems, is of prime importanr j ior Europe and America.

Not since the last revision of Samuel Wells Williams, *The Mic-die Kingdom,* made in 1883, have we had in a European language a satisfactory large, comprehensive book on China and the Chi-nese. Many short works have appeared, some of them excellent, and a few fairly large volumes have been published; but so far none has done for the present generation of the English-speaking-world quite what *The Middle Kingdom* did for our parents and grandparents. Recent years have witnessed a great advance in many phases of our knowledge of the Chinese. Numerous mono-graphs and still more numerous articles in scholarly periodicals have rapidly expanded the West's fund of information concerning them. Fully as interesting and even more important are the changes which have been altering every portion of the nation's life.

The need exists, consequently, for a work which will endeavor to picture afresh the Chinese, their history and civilization, bringing into its composition all our knowledge

concerning them
both old and new. This the following chapters
essay to do. Th
proportions of the picture will inevitably be
influenced by tht
author's own perspective and to many may seem
faulty. Tbr
attempt has been made, however, to portray the
various feature '
of Chinese life, remote and recent, in their relative
importance ai
molders of the nation.

As will be seen by a glance at the table of contents, the geofP raphy and natural resources of China are first described, and thf., influence upon the people. Then follows a summary, comprising
more than half of the work, of the nation's history
from the be-